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# Decentralizing Land Reform: Lessons Drawn from Zimbabwe

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# Context/ Historical Perspective

- Redistributive in nature
  - Aimed at addressing racial inequality between blacks and whites
    - 6000 white farmers occupying about 1/3 of the areas with high agricultural potential
  - Need to de-congest rural tribal trust lands
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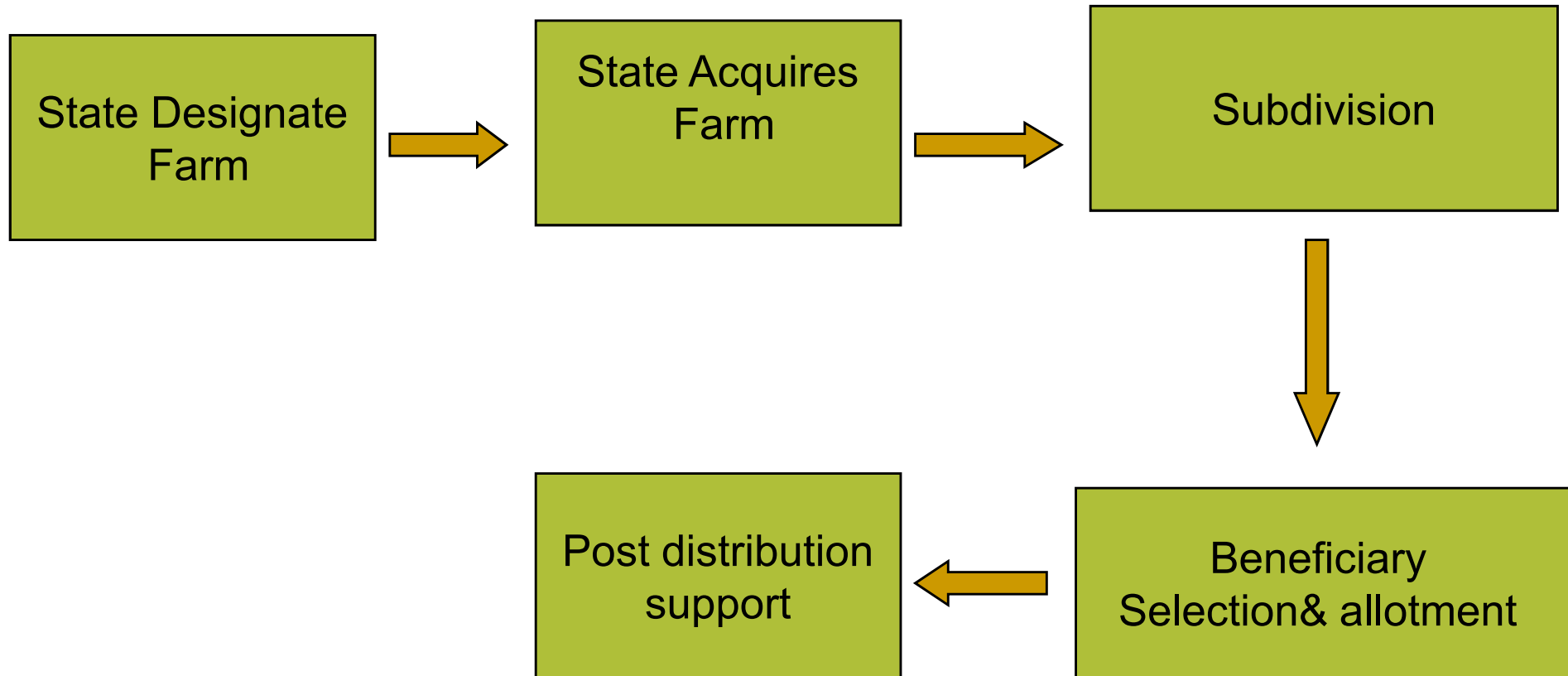
# Time line

- 1890 Colonization
  - 1930 Land Apportionment Act – dualization of economy and landowning system
  - Native Land Husbandry Act (1951)
    - Reorganization of rural settlements into linear patterns
    - Process led to technical restrictions on ‘where’ and ‘how’ people lived and farmed
    - This process of land alienation was central to the mobilization of support for the liberation struggle
  - 1980 the Government inherited a highly skewed land distribution
    - Despite the commitment to land reform, constitutional provisions of the Lancaster House constrained the progress
  - Post independence resettlement process in Zimbabwe can be characterized in two main distinct phases
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# Post Independence Resettlement

- 1980-1984
    - significant progress at redistribution (+/-85 000ha/yr)
    - Targeting returning refugees (process was bureaucratic and slow: model A, B,C)
  - 1985-1989
    - Models were redesigned following the failure of earlier models
  - 1990-1994
    - Emphasis was placed on qualifying beneficiaries
  - 1995-1997
    - Villagized models changed to self contained plots (Small Scale commercial Schemes)
  - 1998
    - Joint government-donor initiative (market driven approaches) aiming at 91 00 families over 5 years
    - Farmers to be selected on basis of technical knowledge
    - The process faltered in 1999!!!!??
  - 2000 'Fast track' land reform
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# Process: Prior to 2000



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# Fast Track Land Reform Process

- February 2000- A ZANU PF constitutional amendment to oblige Britain to compensate for compulsory acquisition (Popular “No” Vote)
  - Prospects of losing the 2000 election due to involvement in DRC war + emerge of MDC
  - War veterans moved in to occupy LSCF, as demonstrations against the slow progress in land acquisition
  - The demonstrations gained increased recognition (and progressively became violent-*jambanja*)
  - War veterans assumed the role of planning and allocating land
  - What happened in the midst of “chaos”
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# Fast Track Land Reform Process

- War veterans allocated plots systematically using rudimentary markers such as pegs, trees and stones
- Strict recognition of legislation dating back from colonial era were enforced- to help gain recognition from the state
- On 15 July 2000, the GVT moved to regularise the process with the aim of redistributing 80% of land held by LSCF
- H/r the state's demarcation process became a act of superimposing settlements already "planned" and "surveyed" by war veterans
- Local leaders and war vets were able to exert control and adjustments to official practice: including farmer qualifications and size of plots
- *IS THIS DECENTRALIZED LAND REFORM?*